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The Only Thing.

Love is the only thing which I need never outgrow. I am bound to outgrow everything else. How many gifts to my youth would be gifts to my old age? Wealth, fame, power, physical beauty, are all for the morning and the mid-day; they are little coveted at evening. But Love in old age can keep the dew of its youth. I have seen a virtuous attachment which was formed by the girl and the boy retain amid the shadows its morning glow. The heart never grows old with *time*. It may grow old with grief or bitterness or care; but not with time. Time has no empire over the heart. It has an empire over the eye, over the ear, over the cheek, over the hand, but not over the heart. The heart may be swept by storms, but not corroded by decay. It keeps no record of the flying years; it is untouched by the winter snow. The inscription upon its gates is ever this—"*There shall be no night there.*"—GEORGE MATHESON.

Christian Civilization.

A large, strong man, dressed in a uniform and armed to the teeth, knocked at the door of a hut on the coast of Africa.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asked a voice from the inside.

"In the name of civilization, open your door, or I'll break it down for you and fill you full of lead."

"But what do you want here?"

"My name is Christian Civilization. Don't talk like a fool, you black brute. What do you suppose I want here but to civilize you, and make a reasonable human being out of you, if it is possible?"

"What are you going to do?"

"In the first place, you must dress yourself like a white man. It's a shame and a disgrace the way you go about. From now on, you must wear underclothing, a pair of pants, vest, coat, plug hat, and pair of yellow gloves. I will furnish them to you at a reasonable price."

"What shall I do with them?"

"Wear them, of course. You didn't expect to eat them, did you? The first step of civilization is to wear proper clothes."

"But it is too hot to wear such garments. I'm not used to them. I shall perish from the heat. Do you want to murder me?"

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"Well, if you die, you will have the satisfaction of being a martyr to civilization."

"You are very kind."

"Don't mention it. What do you do for a living, anyhow?"

"When I am hungry I eat a banana. I eat, drink, or sleep, just as I feel like it."

"What horrible barbarity! You must settle down to some occupation, my friend. If you don't I shall have to lock you up as a vagrant."

"If I've got to follow some occupation, I think I'll start a coffee-house. I've got a good deal of coffee and sugar on hand."

"Oh, you have, have you? Why, you are not such a hopeless case as I thought you were. In the first place you must pay me £5."

"What for?"

"An occupation tax, you innocent heathen. Do you expect to get all the blessings of civilization for nothing?"

"But I have'nt got any money."

"That makes no difference. I'll take it out in sugar and coffee. If you don't pay I'll put you in jail."

"What is a jail?"

"Jail is a progressive word. You must be prepared to make sacrifices for civilization, you know."

"What a great thing civilization is!"

"You cannot possibly realize the benefits, but you will before I have done with you."

The unfortunate native took to the woods, and has not been seen since.—*Freethinker*.

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